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Date: APR 17 1953

Gen. Smith Says Russia Can Keep Abreast of U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gen. Walter Bedell Smith told senators that he believes Russia can keep abreast of this country in turning out trained personnel and in the production of some modern scientific weapons.

Smith, now retired, was the first witness before a Senate Armed Service Subcommittee as it launched a public inquiry aimed at comparing Soviet and U. S. air power.

Sen. Symington (D-MO), the subcommittee chairman, said in opening the hearings that the investigation may publicize some military secrets in the interest of giving the public the knowledge necessary to form judgments on defense issues.

Smith said that in the weapons field the Russians can keep pace with the United States "in areas where they concentrate."

Since World War II, he said, the Soviet Union has shown an unanticipated ability to rebuild its economy, overcome a shortage of scientists and produce the complex weapons of the present atomic age.

"It has intensified our problem greatly," said Smith, who was chief of staff to President Eisenhower in World War II and later served as ambassador to Russia, director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and undersecretary of State.